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Media Release from Kingaroy Concerned Citizens Group (KCCG)

Mining and Cropping Still Hot Topics for the South Burnett

South Burnett landholders and business groups remain convinced that the Queensland Government needs to adjust both its proposed Strategic Cropping Land guidelines and its guidelines for mining companies dealing with local communities.

Kingaroy Concerned Citizens Group organised a meeting in Kingaroy today where Queensland Government representatives from both the Mines and the Environment departments could explain the implications of these issues for the South Burnett region.

After explanation of the Land Access Code from Government officers, the meeting was able to identify several aspects of the code that failed to address the fundamental needs of landholders confronting mining exploration for the first time.

KCCG will be preparing a submission to the Government that strongly recommends practical changes to the current three "A" approach of Exploration Permits (Apply, Approve, then Arrive,)

This will include:

- information booklets to all landholders containing additional essential information
- joint government and applicant company public meetings,
- the right to submit or object to a proposal,
- And the provision of multi-departmental 'quick-links' on government websites so that all information about an application can be easily accessed by the public.

KCCG secretary John Dalton said that the meeting agreed that the current process was confronting, deficient in essential information, and failed to take account of the diversity of landholders needs.

"The Government needs to re-enter the process locally in the same way the referee takes the field before a game. The couple from Mundubbera who attended the meeting today were a terrific testament of how the code can make you feel when applied in its current form. Although compliant with the code, the process can be brutal, it can leave you feeling coerced, and it is selectively informative" he said. "Today's proposal cannot fix all the current problems, but it does address many of them".

The Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) will be dispatching a technical team to the South Burnett next week to examine KCCG's claim that many of the red cropping soils of the Burnett will miss out on SCL protection.

Government representatives at today's meeting confirmed that KCCG understanding of the guidelines about a maximum paddock slope of 5% is correct. This will be examined next week with on-field assessment.

"DERM has been most co-operative in agreeing to additional assessment to validate our concern" Mr Dalton said, "but we still think that in the same way the criteria was adjusted to include the sandy Granite Belt soils, a further adjustment is necessary to ensure sloping fertile red soils are also protected".

John Dalton
(Secretary: Kingaroy Concerned Citizens Group)

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Standing: (left to right): Lionel Wieck (Peanut Company of Australia), Sonny Crumpton (farming and business), Les Blanch (Proston KCCG representative), Gary Tessman (KCCG chairman and Qld Farmers Federation), Ian Crosthwaite (Bean Growers Association)
Seated (left to right): Craig Watson and Todd Ellis (Qld Govt Mines Dept), Cheryl and Fred Heidrick (Mundubbera farmers).



Left to right: Gary Tessman, Ian Crosthwaite, Lionel Wieck

